

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for processing medical documentation for a health care provider, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a medical source document for a health care provider;
 - assigning the medical source document to a work queue defined for specific medical treatment types; and
 - enabling a medical coder to access the medical source document in the work queue through a computer network;
distributing medical source documents to the medical coder using a plurality of categorized work pools, wherein the work queue further comprises prioritized work queues;
allowing the medical coder to electronically code the medical source document to create coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information; and
 - transmitting the coded medical information including encoded treatment procedures to the health care provider electronically.
2. (original) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of creating coded medical information by enabling the medical coder to extract information from the medical source document.
3. (original) A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting the coded medical information to the health care provider further comprises the step of transmitting the coded medical information to the health care provider via an electronic communication means selected from the group of electronic communication means consisting of a fax, secure file transfer protocol (FTP), a web browser and email.
4. (original) A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of enabling a medical coder to access the medical source document in the work queue through a computer network further comprises

the step of enabling a medical coder to access the medical source document via a computer network that is a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), or Internet.

5. (currently amended) A method for processing medical documentation for a health care provider, comprising the steps of:

receiving a medical source document for a health care provider into a hosting server enabled to receive the medical source document;

distributing medical source documents to a medical coder using a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues;

enabling ~~a~~ the medical coder to access the medical source document on the hosting server via a computer network coupled to the hosting server;

facilitating the electronic creation of coded medical information including encoded treatment procedures based on the medical source document as analyzed by the medical coder; and

transmitting the coded medical information to the health care provider.

6. (original) A method as in claim 5, further comprising the step of enabling the medical coder to access the medical source document on the hosting server via a network selected from the group of networks consisting of a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), and Internet.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A method as in claim 5, wherein the step of enabling a medical coder to access the medical source document further comprises the step of distributing medical source documents to a plurality of medical coders via a computer network coupled to the hosting server to allow conversion of the medical source documents to coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information.

10. (currently amended) A method for processing medical documentation for a health care provider, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a medical source document for a health care provider into a hosting server enabled to receive the medical source document;
 - enabling a medical documentation hander to access the medical source document on the hosting server via a computer network coupled to the hosting server;
 - distributing medical source documents to the medical documentation hander using a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues;
 - facilitating the electronic creation of processed medical data that includes coded medical billing information based on the medical source document analyzed by a the medical documentation hander; and
 - transmitting the processed medical data to the health care provider.
11. (original) A method as in claim 10, further comprising the step of restricting the medical documentation hander from being able to save the medical source document on a local computer.
12. (original) A method as in claim 10 further comprising the step of retaining the medical source document on the hosting server while enabling the medical documentation hander to process the medical source document on a local computer.
13. (cancelled)
14. (currently amended) A medical documentation processing system, comprising:
 - a plurality of electronic inputs configured to receive medical source documents for a health care provider;
 - a coding server, coupled to the electronic inputs, having electronic storage to store the medical source documents received; and
 - a plurality of coding queues, including a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues, within the coding server to which the medical source documents

are assigned and through which a medical coder can access the medical source documents and create coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information from the medical source document; and

a plurality of electronic output channels configured to transmit the coded medical information to the health care provider.

15. (original) A device in accordance with claim 14, wherein the electronic output channels are selected from the group of electronic output channels consisting of a fax, a secure file transfer protocol (FTP), a web browser and email.

16. (original) A device in accordance with claim 14, wherein medical source documents are assigned to the plurality of coding queues based on a priority value assigned to the medical source documents.

17. (currently amended) A method for processing medical documentation for health care providers, comprising the steps of:

receiving a treatment record from a health care service provider;
converting the treatment record to a medical source document;
assigning the medical source document to a work queue defined for a specific medical specialty; and

distributing medical source documents to a medical coder using a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues;

enabling a the medical coder to access the medical source document in the work queue through a computer network;

allowing the medical coder to code the medical source document which creates coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information; and

validating codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid; and

transmitting the coded medical information to the health care service provider.

18. (original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the step of converting the treatment record to a medical source document further comprises the step of transcribing the treatment record into a medical source document.
19. (original) A method as in claim 17, wherein the step of converting the treatment record to a medical source document further comprises the step of scanning the treatment record into a medical source document.
20. (currently amended) A method for processing electronic medical source documentation received for a health care provider, comprising the steps of:
 - assigning the electronic medical source document to a work pool defined for specific medical treatment types;
 - prioritizing the electronic medical source document for further processing based on priority factors;
 - distributing medical source documents to a medical coder using a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues;
 - enabling a the medical coder to access the electronic medical source document accompanied by a priority designation in the work queue through a computer network;
 - allowing the medical coder to code the medical source document to create coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information; and
 - transmitting the coded medical information to the health care provider.
21. (original) A method as in claim 20, wherein the step of assigning the electronic medical source document to a work pool defined for specific medical treatment types further comprises the step of assigning the electronic medical source document to a work pool defined for medical specialties or sub-specialties.
22. (cancelled)

23. (currently amended) A method as in claim 22 20, further comprising the step of prioritizing the electronic medical source document in a work queue based on the remaining turnaround time available.
24. (currently amended) A method as in claim 22 20, further comprising the step of prioritizing the electronic medical source document in a work queue based on the percentage of coded medical information that is to be coded before a defined deadline.
25. (currently amended) A method as in claim 22 20, further comprising the step of organizing the electronic medical source documents into batches in a work queue and then prioritizing the batches to allow for efficient coding.
26. (currently amended) A method as in claim 22 20, further comprising the step of dividing the electronic medical source documents into priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers and non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers.
27. (original) A method as in claim 26, further comprising the step of dividing the electronic medical source documents into priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers assigned to the medical coder and priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers not assigned to the medical coder.
28. (original) A method as in claim 27, further comprising the step of dividing the electronic medical source documents into non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers assigned to the medical coder and non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers not assigned to the medical coder.
29. (currently amended) A medical records processing system, comprising:
a plurality of electronic inputs configured to receive a medical source document for a health care provider;

a hosting server, coupled to the electronic inputs, having electronic storage to store the medical source document received; and

a plurality of coding queues having a plurality of categorized work pools and a plurality of prioritized work queues within the hosting server to which the medical source document is assigned based on a priority designation assigned to the medical source document;

a networked interface through which a medical coder can access the medical source document with the priority designation and create coded medical information that includes coded medical billing information from the medical source document;

a medical code validation module that checks the codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid; and

a plurality of electronic output channels configured to transmit the coded medical information to the health care provider.

30. (original) A system as in claim 29, wherein the electronic medical source documents are divided into a plurality of work pools based on specific medical treatment types.

31. (original) A system as in claim 29, wherein the priority designation assigned to the medical source document is based on the remaining turnaround time available.

32. (original) A system as in claim 29, wherein the priority designation assigned to the medical source document is based on the percentage of coded medical information that are to be coded before a pre-defined deadline.

33. (original) A system as in claim 29, wherein electronic medical source documents are organized into batches in a work pool and the batches are prioritized to allow for efficient coding.

34. (original) A system as in claim 29, wherein the electronic medical source documents are divided into priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers and non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers.

35. (original) A system as in claim 34, wherein the electronic medical source documents are divided into priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers assigned to the medical coder and priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers not assigned to the medical coder.

36. (original) A system as in claim 35, wherein the electronic medical source documents are divided into non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers assigned to the medical coder and non-priority electronic medical source documents from health care providers not assigned to the medical coder.

37-55 (canceled)

56. (new) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of validating codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid.

57. (new) A method as in claim 5, further comprising the step of validating codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid.

58. (new) A method as in claim 10, further comprising the step of validating codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid.

59. (new) A device in accordance with claim 14, further comprising a medical code validation module that checks the codes entered or selected by the medical coder to determine whether the medical codes are valid.